

NSC BRIEFING

CAMBODIA

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- I. Premier Sihanouk's personal decision recognize Peiping has met with varying internal reactions.
  - A. Policy-reviewing National Congress scheduled open Phnom Penh 27 July postponed sine die, indicating Sihanouk needs more time prepare for unanimous acceptance.
  - B. Many Cambodian leaders fearful consequence recognition but tend feel no other choice in view Vietnamese hostility and need accept reality of Chinese Communist "colossus." They hopeful damage can be "limited."
  - C. Dap Chhuon, anti-Communist governor Sien Reap Province, has sent word American ambassador he "deeply distressed" by recognition. Says he loyal to monarchy and Sihanouk but loves country more than either these.
- II. Next developments this situation largely dependent Saigon acticas.
  - A. President Diem claims no precipitate action will be taken against Cambodia in retaliation recognition.
  - B. At same time he not willing to go out of way conciliate differences, as he convinced Sihanouk dangerous Communist tool and must somehow be removed.
  - C. Company of Vietnamese marines ordered 25 July to disputed island group off Phu Quoc Island in Gulf Siam. Presence small Cambodian garrisons some these islands raises threat of incident.
  - D.  Vietnam seeking to persuade rich overseas Chinese in Cambodia to emigrate with their capital to Vietnam, Since these Chinese alarmed at recognition Peiping, they may do so
    1. Saigon's purpose is to weaken Cambodian economy, strengthen their own.

**III. Sihanouk plans visit Peiping 10 August,**

- A. Distinct possibility he may accept preferred Chinese military assistance that time, unless some display Vietnamese goodwill undercuts such move.**
- B. Primary necessity is for Vietnam agree remove strongly defended concrete border marker erected over mile inside old Cambodian frontier during Vietnamese army border incursion mid-June.**
- C. Cambodian fear and hatred Vietnamese immediate and real is contrast mild attitude toward "remote" Chinese.**

**IV. US reaction Cambodian recognition also crucial.**

- A. Ambassador Stoen in Phnom Penh feels tough attitude will only drive Cambodia further left.**
- B. Diem government feels Sihanouk will be overthrown by moderates if US cuts aid.**
- C. Ambassador Johnson in Bangkok says Thai strongly desire US retain its presence in Cambodia to ward off Communist influence.**
- D. Ambassador Smith in Vientiane fears unless US clearly penalizes Cambodia, Laos will be inclined permit establishment resident Soviet representation and enter into economic and political relations with Communist China.**